6 Tips for Managing Holiday Stress

Let's face it – the holidays can be a stressful time. Between parties, family commitments, crowded shopping malls and gift giving – it's no wonder so many people get stressed out. Although it's difficult to eliminate stress entirely, consider these six tips for staying sane during the holidays – and every other day of the year.

1. Manage Your Time Efficiently

Begin your day by organizing your work and setting priorities. Determine what's most important, write down goals and break the large tasks down into smaller, more manageable ones. Be realistic and flexible in the way you schedule time by recognizing your limitations and allowing time for the unexpected.

2. Recognize What You Can and Can't Control

People who feel in control of their lives are less prone to stress. But recognize that there will always be things that can't be fully controlled – like a sudden family illness or extra, last minute guests at the dinner table. Finding a balance between wanting to control everything and having no control at all is an important part of managing stress.

3. Take Care of Your Body

In the midst of a busy schedule, the last thing you may have time for is yourself. Yet, a balanced diet and some physical activity every day, whether it be a gentle stroll or an intense work out, can make all the difference in relieving stress and keeping your moods on an even keel. Getting enough sleep is very important too!

4. Keep Your Sense of Humor

Studies show that laughter, and even the anticipation of laughter, can lighten moods. It may be difficult to see the funny side of stressful situations when you're in a crisis, but taking time to laugh with friends and keep perspective can be a great stress antidote.

5. Look for Ways to Help Others

When you're overwhelmed, responding to the needs of others can relieve anxieties and put your problems in perspective. Volunteering for a community project or helping a friend in need can also benefit you. If you remember to give as well as receive, you're more likely to grow a network of friends that will support you through the good and bad times.

6. Remember the Importance of Family

In today's hectic world, it's easy to feel like you don't have enough time to be with the ones you love. But in reality, the most important people in your life deserve your attention more than anything else. There's no better time than the holidays to stay connected and strengthen bonds with your family.

Although no one is immune to stress, these simple tips can help minimize the stress that often accompanies the holidays. Who knows, you may end up enjoying the holidays more than you thought you would!

**For help managing stress and other issues,
call MHN anytime at (866) EAP-4SOC.**

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